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ABSTRACT

The Teacher Center at the University of Houston-Clear Lake (Texas) invites public school supervisors who work with their student teachers, and any other teachers who are interested in supervising student teachers, to a High Tea/inservice program each semester. In planning the inservice program, the organizers first look at evaluations from previous years to get an idea of what skills teachers may wish to attain. Careful planning must go into the scheduling of this session before the meeting can be held. The student teacher must have been in the classroom for an adequate period of time so that he or she can assume responsibility for the class when the supervisor goes to the university for High Tea. When the supervisor arrives at the university for the inservice, registration occurs at the door so that a certificate of attendance can be issued and staff development credit obtained. A 15 minute period for visiting and introducing themselves to teachers from other districts starts the session off. A presentation dealing with the procedures of the tripartite team (student teacher, public school supervisor, and university supervisor) is generally followed by a question-and-answer period. The next session is devoted to a particular aspect of supervision. There is then a break for High Tea, which is followed by individual sessions with university supervisors. The final step involves teachers filling out evaluation forms and receiving their certificates of attendance. A time schedule for the inservice, a certificate of attendance, a sheet on "using feedback wisely," and an evaluation form are appended. (JMK)

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High Tea for Public School Supervisors? Really!

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High Tea for Public School Supervisors? Really!

"An invitation to a High Tea? Really?" If you received such an invitation, would you go? This question is repeated each semester when the Teacher Center at the University of Houston-Clear Lake invites the public school supervisors who work with their student teachers, and any other teachers who are interested in supervising student teachers and who can arrange to be free, to a High Tea/inservice program. By now, word has reached public school faculties that this meeting is something special and is one they should not miss. But the question arises, "How did the Teacher Center manage to create this attitude toward inservice?" It is interesting to see the development of this attitude.

True research always begins with a search of literature on the subject. Such a survey, dealing with inservice opportunities, showed one truism standing out: INSERVICE IS NOT EFFECTIVE IF IT COMES FROM THE TOP DOWN; RATHER, ONLY INSERVICE NEEDS THAT ARE VERBALIZED AT THE TEACHER'S LEVEL, WITH HELP FROM THE ADMINISTRATION TO FIND THE PROPER REMEDIATION PROGRAM, ARE LIKELY TO SUCCEED.

In planning a successful inservice program, then, the first step is to discover the needs of the teachers, learning from them what specific skills they wish to attain. Discovering their needs is objective number one. (See Plate 4)

These people to be inserviced are the model teachers, mutually selected by the University and public school officials, in Texas through the Teacher Centers. Since independent school districts serve as laboratories for student teachers, the model supervising teachers who work daily with these neophyte teachers are vital to the Schools of Education throughout the nation. These supervising teachers must be selected with care, for they will provide the practical, real-life experiences from which students will learn practices

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that they will be using in their own classrooms one semester after the student teaching experience. As a consequence, the needs of these model teachers must be of paramount concern to Schools of Education. UH-Clear Lake gleans their ideas for needed inservice from evaluation sheets used at the High Tea/inservice sessions.

Since the schools often do not recognize these teachers or emphasize the importance attached to their selection, the universities must impress upon them the importance of these positions, for the job requires collaborative planning and the execution of plans with the members of the "team" i.e., student teacher, university supervisor, and public school supervisor.

Some states, such as Texas and West Virginia, recognize these model teachers by paying a stipend to them at the end of the year for the service they have rendered to their profession. Other types of honoraria are used by various universities and by various states to attempt to repay the public school supervisors for the hours of work they give to their student teachers. Generally, the "pay" is too small to be a factor other than act as recognition to the public school supervisor.

One way the University of Houston-Clear Lake attempts to reward these teachers is to invite them to "High Tea" rather than saying "Please come to an Inservice Program". All the participants seem to enjoy the recognition and appreciation expressed to them by the University team that is presenting the inservice program. Half-way through the inservice sessions, there is a forty-five minute break scheduled when tables of attractive hor d'oeuvres are wheeled into the room, amid sighs and oh's and ah's, providing an opportunity for all participants to relax at the end of the day and to visit with each other as they enjoy the refreshments. Can hospitality and High Tea

become an enticement or a reward, then? The answer is "yes" if the whole affair is handled tactfully and in the tradition of a High Tea. Careful planning must go into the scheduling of this session before the meeting can be held. The sequential steps that follow include these plans: (see Plate 1)

1. After the student teacher has been in the classroom for a month, he/she can assume full responsibility for the afternoon classes while the public school supervisor comes to the University for "High Tea." This time in complete charge gives the student an opportunity to "feel" the responsibility of the entire classes and allows him/her to try his techniques of classroom control and content sequence with complete authority. It also prevents the district from having to hire a substitute teacher for ½ day.
2. A period of registration occurs at the door so that Certificates of Attendance (attractive, parchment certificates) can be issued at the end of the sessions. The University of Houston-Clear Lake works with seventeen surrounding independent school districts, and these districts have agreed to offer staff development credit for attendance at these sessions. (See Plate 2)
3. A fifteen minute period for visiting and introducing themselves to teachers from other districts helps to start the afternoon's sessions off on an informal note.
4. A presentation dealing with the procedures of the tripartite team (student teacher, public school supervisor, and university supervisor) followed by a question-and-answer session generally occurs. Following this session there is time devoted to some aspect of supervision specifically (room arrangements, diagrams, interaction analyses, and guidelines for feedback sessions have been best

received in the past). (See Plate 3) Experience has shown that ideas gained from these sessions are used by these supervising teachers the week after the inservice meeting.

5. Break for High Tea
6. Individual sessions with the university supervisors occur for approximately an hour after the refreshments. At this time informal discussions of procedures the team members expect to use in their operation are held.
7. The teachers return to the original setting to complete an evaluation sheet regarding their opinions of the day's activities. From these evaluation sheets come suggestions for future inservice programs. (See Plate 4)
8. Certificates of attendance are awarded

The open-ended questions have proved to be most helpful as a source of honest feedback. Since the forms are not signed, it is felt that the opinions expressed are reliable. The "High Tea" has become a tradition and forms a day different enough from public school routine to be a pleasant and worthwhile afternoon.

SCHEDULE FOR INSERVICE FOR SUPERVISORS OF STUDENT TEACHERS

September 15, 1982 2:00 to 5:00 pm

2:00 - 2:15	Registration - Room 2-532
2:15 - 3:15	Nancy Boze - Student Teaching Goals
3:15 - 3:45	High Tea
3:45 - 4:45	Meet with University Supervisors (Room locations to be announced)
4:45 - 5:00	Certificates of Attendance - Room 2-532 Complete Evaluation Sheets and receive Certificates of Attendance

Plate 1

Using Feedback Wisely

Please consider the following definitions and uses of feedback as you work with your student teachers and write your observation reports.

Feedback is a communication to a person (or group) which gives that person information about how he affects others.

Some criteria for useful feedback:

1. It is descriptive rather than evaluative. By describing one's own reaction, it leaves the individual free to use it or to use it as he sees fit. Use "Why did ----", "Was it ---", "What was the result of ---". By avoiding evaluative language, you reduce the need for the student teacher to react defensively.

2. It is specific rather than general. To be told that one is "dominating" will probably not be as useful as to be told that "Just now when we were deciding the issue, you did not listen to what others said and I felt forced to accept your arguments or face attack from you."

3. It takes into account the needs of both the receiver and giver of feedback. Feedback can be destructive when it serves only our own needs and fails to consider the needs of the person on the receiving end.

4. It is directed toward behavior which the receiver can do something about. Frustration is only increased when a person is reminded of some shortcoming over which he has no control. Give some specific examples for improvement and use these to set some goals for the next observation.

5. It is solicited, rather than imposed. Feedback is most useful when the receiver himself has formulated the kind of question which those observing him can answer. Can you include these in setting goals for the next observation?

6. It is well timed. In general, feedback is most useful at the earliest opportunity after the given behavior (depending, of course, on the person's readiness to hear it, support available from others, etc.) Your immediate feedback is valuable. Take time after each observation for discussions.

7. It is checked to insure clear communication. One way of doing this is to have receiver try to rephrase the feedback he has received to see if it corresponds to what the sender had in mind. Use this technique to set goals.

Feedback, then, is a way of giving help; it is a corrective mechanism for the individual who wants to learn how well his behavior matches his intentions. It should be a record to show emphases and judge improvement.

Plate 3

DATE

PUBLIC SCHOOL SUPERVISING TEACHER INSERVICE EVALUATION

THE THING I LIKED BEST ABOUT TODAY'S PROGRAM WAS_____

I WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE FOLLOWING INCLUDED AT A FUTURE TIME

I FEEL THE PROGRAM WOULD BE BETTER IF THIS CHANGE WERE MADE

I THINK THE FOLLOWING TEACHERS HAVE DEVELOPED WORTHWHILE TECHNIQUES THAT COULD BE SHARED. PLEASE CONTACT THEM.

NAME	ISD	SCHOOL	TOPIC

COMMENTS:

University of Houston at Clear Lake City

This certifies that

_____

has completed the _____ *hour inservice program of professional development for schoolbased supervisor of student teachers.*

TEACHER EDUCATION CENTER

_____

Dean, School of Professional Education

_____

Date

Plate 2